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General Assembly

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Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 19
Sustainable development

Letter dated 22 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to attach information on the activities of the Republic of Kazakhstan with regard to the improvement of the environmental and socioeconomic situation in the Aral Sea region (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19.

(*Signed*) Kairat **Abdrakhmanov**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

14-31966 (E) 060514 070514

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Annex to the letter dated 22 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Information on the activities of Kazakhstan with regard to the improvement of the environmental and socioeconomic situation in the Aral Sea region

The Republic of Kazakhstan is carrying out a significant amount of work to improve the environmental and socioeconomic situation in the Aral Sea region. Over $2.7 billion has been allocated for that purpose.

In the late twentieth century, the Kazakh part of the Aral Sea region was declared an ecological disaster zone. In 1992 Kazakhstan adopted an Act on the social protection of citizens suffering from the effects of the ecological disaster in the Aral Sea region. Local residents were provided with compensation and social benefits by law.

With the support and cooperation of the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United States Agency for International Development and other international organizations and foreign States, a number of projects aimed at tackling environmental issues and fostering socioeconomic development have been carried out in the Kazakh part of the Aral Sea basin.

Programmes to address the problems of the Aral Sea region through a comprehensive approach were implemented in 2004-2006 and 2007-2009 with allocations of $380 million from the national budget.

Phase 1 of a large-scale national project on Syrdarya River control and northern Aral Sea conservation was carried out in the Kazakh part of the Aral Sea region as part of the Aral Sea Basin Programme at a cost of over $100 million. The project resulted in the construction of the Kok-Aral dam, the doubling of the capacity of the Syrdarya River, a rise in the volume of water in the Northern Aral from 15.6 to 26.7 m^3 and an increase in the reservoir area from 2,414 to 3,262 km^2. Conditions were established that have enabled the breeding and catching of valuable species of fish and biodiversity has been restored. In cooperation with the World Bank, work is under way to prepare for the implementation of phase 2 of the Syrdarya River control and northern Aral Sea conservation project at an approximate cost of $195 million.

Thanks to sector programmes carried out in 2002-2011, around 200 km of the water distribution network have been built or reconstructed in the Aral Sea region in order to provide the population with a steady supply of high-quality drinking water, and over 20 educational facilities and an equivalent number of health care facilities have been built. By 2013, aqueducts totalling 270 km in length were in operation and over 100 public schools and kindergartens and 50 hospitals, polyclinics, outpatient facilities and midwifery clinics were under construction or being refurbished.

Projects have also been implemented to build flood prevention dams, deliver clean drinking water to populations in remote localities, carry out forest reclamation, increase the area of the Barsa-Kelmes Nature Reserve, refill dried-up lakes in the Syrdarya River delta, and irrigate pastures and hayfields.

Implementation of Phase 3 of the Aral Sea Basin Programme, the programme to prevent desertification in the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2005-2015, and other sector programmes is under way.

In 2013 Kazakhstan also held a series of major conferences, seminars, training sessions, round tables and other important social events timed to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea.

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General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 110
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 30 April 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to draw your attention to the following information:

The terrorism directed against the Syrian State and people continues to escalate and has now reached unprecedented levels. Residential areas, schools, hospitals, infrastructure and Muslim and Christian places of worship have been deliberately attacked with car bombs and explosives and have been shelled indiscriminately. Hundreds of innocent civilians, most of whom were women and children, have been killed in the past few days. The aim of these attacks is to terrorize the Syrian people as part of a deluded attempt by those who embrace Wahhabism and takfirist ideology, and certain countries and actors from the region and beyond that support them, to set Syrian society back centuries and return it to the dark ages.

As part of their campaign of organized crime, armed terrorist groups committed horrific massacres when they shelled a number of schools in Damascus, killing and injuring dozens of innocent schoolchildren. Yesterday, Tuesday, 29 April, armed terrorist groups fired mortar shells at the Badr al-Din al-Husni Institute of Islamic Law in the Shaghur quarter; 14 students were killed in the attack and 86 others suffered injuries of varying severity. That same day, in the afternoon, terrorist groups fired several mortar rounds at a temporary shelter in a school in the Adra al-Balad area, killing 3 children between the ages of 4 and 14 and 1 civilian, and wounding 19 others. That shelter houses many families who were forced to leave their homes as a result of terrorist attacks by armed groups. Armed terrorist groups had previously committed another massacre when they shelled the Manar School, killing 2 children and wounding 60 others, some of them seriously. It has been noted recently that there is a pattern to these systematic attacks: hospitals and schools are targeted simultaneously so as to compel the medical staff to evacuate the hospital under attack. This is done to increase pressure on other hospitals and create

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panic and chaos, thereby hindering the ability of medical staff to treat the wounded. Terrorist groups continue to indiscriminately shell of certain areas of Damascus and the surrounding countryside on a daily basis. Yesterday, 29 April, they fired 9 mortar shells at Abbasiyyin and Zablatani, wounding 8 civilians; the terrorists also fired a number of shells at the residential town of Jaramana, killing 6 civilians, including a woman and 3 children between the ages of 10 and 14, wounding 32 others and causing considerable damage to property.

In Aleppo, within earshot and in sight of the United Nations team that recently visited that city, terrorist gangs attacked a number of the city's residential districts with mortar rounds, rockets and sniper fire. Dozens of unarmed civilians were killed, including 20 who were waiting to buy bread from a bakery. Terrorist gangs also continue to perpetrate acts of terrorism against the city's historic patrimony; using hundreds of tons of explosives, they destroyed a number of tunnels they had excavated under historic buildings. The terrorists also destroyed an electrical transformer station in order to deny civilians essential services that the Syrian Government provided to them. It is deplorable that the terrorist groups in Aleppo are not only using deadly weapons provided to them by certain States, including Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey the United States of America and France, but are also using locally made rockets to cause as much chaos and suffering as possible. One such weapon is the so-called hellfire cannon, which fires cooking gas cylinders packed with steel ball bearings, nails, sharp metal pieces and highly explosive material, and it has been used to target residential areas. These projectiles do not merely kill innocent civilians and cause considerable infrastructure damage, but also maim huge numbers of civilians, most of whom are children, slicing off their limbs and causing them long-term suffering.

Homs has also not been spared by these criminal groups, who shell the city's residential areas on a daily basis. Yesterday, 29 April 2014, terrorist groups perpetrated a despicable massacre when they detonated two car bombs in a residential area, killing 40 civilians, most of whom were women and children, and wounding 116 others. This attack, which was similar to attacks perpetrated by Al-Qaida, comprised a series of consecutive explosions to ensure the greatest number possible of casualties among civilians and emergency medical personnel.

The aforementioned attacks are just some examples of the acts of terrorism and hatred being committed by armed terrorist groups against residential areas and civilians across Syria. The aim of these acts is to terrorize civilians, disrupt Syrians' daily lives and prevent students from attending school and pursuing education. The systematic targeting of civilians by terrorist groups would not be on the rise were it not for the considerable material, military, logistic and political support that certain countries in the region and beyond are providing them. It is such support that encourages those groups to flout morality and the law, and has convinced them that they will not be held responsible for their actions, particularly in view of the double standards that certain countries are applying with regard to their commitments to combat international terrorism.

In putting these facts before you, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic wishes to highlight that acts of terrorism targeting Syrian civilians are now increasing in frequency and for clear political reasons. The Syrian Government trusts that the Secretary-General and the Security Council will unequivocally condemn these criminal actions. The Government also emphasises that, by openly

and directly supporting terrorism in Syria through the financing, arming, training and harbouring of armed terrorist groups, certain countries in the region and beyond bear responsibility for the killing of innocent Syrian civilians. Their actions are in stark violation of the Security Council resolutions concerning counter-terrorism. Accordingly, the Syrian Government calls on the Council to take immediately appropriate action against the countries sponsoring terrorist groups in Syria, in accordance with its resolutions concerning counter-terrorism.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 110, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative